

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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DRC-01 /168 W

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R 210915Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6935

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 5897

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5-& : PFOR, PINT, TS

SUBJECT: FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT THE PSD PARTY CONGRESS

REF: TUNIS 5754, 5710, 5705

1. SUMMARY: DURING THE DESTOURIAN SOCIALIST PARTY (PSD) CONGRESS), GOT SENIOR OFFICIALS DESCRIBED TUNISIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN ALL AREAS OF MAJOR CONCERN TO THE COUNTRY. FIRST ATTENTION WAS ACCORDED TO PROTECTION OF TUNISIA'S SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH PREVENTION OF OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE OF ANY SORT IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. GOT LEADERS DECLARED THEIR DESIRE FOR PEACE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION AND FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL NATIONS OF THE WORLD. STRONG SUPPORT WAS GIVEN TO THE ARAB CAUSE IN PALESTINE. UNIFICATION OF THE MAGHREB WAS TREATED AS A DISTANT GOAL, TO BE ACHIEVED ONLY THROUGH PATIENT OVERCOMING OF LEGITIMATE SELF-INTEREST. THE UNITED STATES WAS
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ACCORDED PRAISE FOR HAVING BEEN AN OLD FRIEND OF

TUNISIA AND FOR PROVIDING SECURITY TO THE REGION. THESE STATEMENTS INDICATE THAT TUNISIA WILL CONTINUE ITS TRADITIONAL FOREIGN POLICY OF "NON-ALIGNMENT" WITH A CLEAR PREFERENCE FOR THE US AND OTHER WESTERN POWERS. SUGGESTION OF UNION WITH LIBYA, WAS ONCE AGAIN REJECTED. SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIANS HAS BEEN FULLY RE-ITERATED AND RANKS HIGH AS AN EMOTIONAL ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE PSD CONGRESS THREE MAJOR STATEMENTS OF TUNISIAN FOREIGN POLICY WERE MADE BY GOT LEADERS. PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA AND PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA TREATED THE SUBJECTS IN THEIR FIRST SPEECHES TO THE CONGRESS (SEE TUNIS 5705 AND 5710). ALSO, FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTI GAVE A LENGTHY PRESS INTERVIEW DISCUSSING FOREIGN POLICY.

3. NOUIRA'S SPEECH SEPT 13 WAS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE OF THE STATEMENTS, METHODICALLY TOUCHING ALL BASES. HE BEGAN BY STATING THAT THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF GOT FOREIGN POLICY IS TO PREVENT FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, INCLUDING INTERVENTION "DRAPED IN IDEOLOGICAL PRETENSIONS". HE DECLARED THAT TUNISIA WANTS A "SERENE" MAGHREB AND A "PEACEFUL" MEDITERRANEAN "OPENING ON AN ATLANTIC OCEAN WHERE DEVELOPMENTS CONCERN US AND WHERE WE HAVE OLD TIES OF FRIENDSHIP WITH ONE OF THE TWO MAJOR PROTAGONISTS, THE UNITED STATES, WHICH WAS AT A CRUCIAL MOMENT OF OUR EXISTENCE, A GUARANTOR OF OUR INDEPENDENCE." NOUIRA THEN ENUMERATED THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS: A) SOLIDARITY WITH ALL PEOPLE FIGHTING FOR THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND DIGNITY; B) AID FOR THE PALESTINIANS, "VICTIMS OF THE GREATEST INJUSTICE OF MODERN TIMES;" C) ACCORD AND FRIENDSHIP WITH OUR NEIGHBORS; D) UNDERSTANDING AND SOLIDARITY WITH ARAB COUNTRIES IN THEIR FIGHT TO LIBERATE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES; E) ACCORD WITH STATES BORDERING THE MEDITERRANEAN, "ESPECIALLY FRANCE WHICH IS AT THE HEART OF THE MEDITERRANEAN FUTURE; AND UNDERSTANDING WITH THE US WHICH IS AT THE HEART OF THE SECURITY OF THE REGION;" (TUNIS 5710 TRANSLATED THIS PHRASE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENTLY
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BECAUSE OF FAULTY FRENCH APPEARING IN PRESS); F) CONSTRUCTIVE COOPERATION WITH THE EEC; G) GOOD RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA, "WHICH IS AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF DETENTE IN EUROPE;" H) CORDIAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION AS ACTIVE AS POSSIBLE WITH CHINA AND JAPAN; AND I) "BETTER AFRICAN COHESION." NOUIRA FOLLOWED THIS LIST WITH SPECIAL REMARKS ON UNIFICATION OF THE MAGHREB, CALLING IT A TASK DEMANDING PATIENCE AND INTELLIGENCE

AND IMAGINATION TO OVERCOME THE LEGITIMATE SELF-
INTEREST (OF PARTICULAR STATES). NOUIRA COMPLETED
HIS FOREIGN POLICY REMARKS BY CALLING THEM TUNISIA'S
CONCEPTION OF NON-ALIGNMENT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TUNIS 5897

4. PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S TREATMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY
WAS A LESS COMPLETE AND MORE SUCCINCT STATEMENT OF
TUNISIA'S FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS. HE BEGAN BY STATING
THAT TUNISIA CAN NOW LIVE ON ITS OWN RESOURCES AND NEED
NOT SEEK FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, ALTHOUGH IT IS USEFUL AND
DESIRABLE. (NOUIRA WAS LESS CONFIDENT ON THIS POINT,
STATING THAT THE ECONOMY IS STILL FRAGILE, NEEDS ARE
IMMENSE, AND TUNISIA STILL CANNOT FOREGO USE OF EXTERNAL
CAPITA.) BOURGUIBA DECLARED THAT THE OVERRIDING DETER-
MINANT OF TUNISIA'S FOREIGN POLICY IS ITS ARAB/MUSLIM
LANGUAGE, RELIGION, AND CIVILIZATION. TURNING TO

TUNISIA'S NEAR NEIGHBORS BOURGUIBA DECLARED HIS SUPPOFT
FOR WHATEVER STEPS CAN BE TAKEN TO UNITE ALL THE
MAGHREB STATES FROM MAURITANIA TO LIBYA. WE DO NOT

HIDE, HE SAID, OUR PREFERENCE FOR A FORMULA THAT INCLUDES ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION. REGARDING FUSION, HE ADDED, IT REMAINS A DIFFICULT-TO-REALIZE FINAL OBJECTIVE, "PERHAPS A SIMPLE DREAM OF YOUTH."
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BOURGUIBA ALSO EXPRESSED THE NECESSWTY FOR DEVELOPING GOOD RELATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN IN ORDER TO OBTAIN TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOP COMOERCE. HE STATED TUNISIA'S SUPPMRT FOR LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA, ASIA, AND OTHER CONTINENTS. HE COMPLETED HIS TREATMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY WITH A STATEMENT ON THE PALESTINE QUESTION, SUPPORTING THE "RETURN OF AN OPPRESSED PEOPLE TO THEIR DESPOILED FATHERLAND." HE DECLARED THAT THE ONLY POSSIBLE SOLUTION IS RETURN TO THE 1947 PARTITION DECISIONS. (THE PALESTINE PROBLEM DREW DELEGATE APPLAUSE WHENEVER MENTIONED THROUGHOUT THE CONGRESS; AND PLO REPRESENTATIVE KHALED AL-HASSAN SPOKE FOR NEARLY TWO HOURS SEPT 12, AS BOURGUIBA LISTENED SEEMINGLY ENRAPTURED.)

5. FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTI'S STATEMENT OF TUNISIA'S FOREIGN POLICY WAS PUBLISHED AS AN INTERVIEW IN THE PSD PRESS AS THE CONGRESS CONVENED. HIS REMARKS COVERED MUCH THE SAME GROUND AS HIS SUPERIORS IN THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT BUT GAVE MORE ATTENTION TO TUNISIA'S NON-ALIGNMENT, DECLARING THAT IT WANTED NO MILITARY ALLIANCE WITH EITHER THE EASTERN OR WESTERN BLOC AND HAD NO TIES WITH THE SUPER POWERS. DISCUSSING FOREIGN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, CHATTI SAID THAT TUNISIA HAS SOUGHT AID WHEREVER IT PROMISED TO BE FRUITFUL. HE MENTIONED THAT SUCH COOPERATION HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE US, FRANCE, GERMANY AND WILL BE SOON FROM CHINA, SAUDI ARABIA AND CERTAIN COUNTRIES OF THE (PERSIAN) GULF.

6. COMMENT: USG FARED WELL IN THESE POLICY STATEMENTS. THERE WAS NO RPT NO CALL FOR WITHDRAWAL OF EITHER

GREAT POWER FLEET FROM MEDITERRANEAN, AND USG/GOT FRIENDSHIP WAS NOTED FAVORABLY. INDEED, NOUIRA'S COMMENTS MAY HAVE REPRESENTED A GOT EFFORT TO RETREAT FROM CHATTI'S EARLIER REMARKS ABOUT PRESENCE GREAT POWER FLEETS IN MEDITERRANEAN (A-125, AUGUST 20). THE TREATMENT ACCORDED PLANS FOR GREATER MAGHREB FOLLOWED STANDARD LINES, SUGGESTION OF UNION WITH LIBYA HAS ONCE AGAIN BEEN REJECTED.
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